

Journal of The American Institute of  
**ARCHITECTS**



ASSYRIAN ENAMELLED BRICK

JANUARY, 1956

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Italy's Wonderful New Architecture

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The Training of Future Architects

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Richard Morris Hunt—II

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Right as Wright Can Be

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Our Profession and Its Place—II

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Architecture as Science and as Art—II

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Honors : They Say : Books

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THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

WITH THE AIM OF AMPLIFYING  
AS THROUGH A MICROPHONE  
THE VOICE OF THE PROFESSION

JANUARY, 1956

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Cover spot: Assyrian enamelled brick from Nimcoud

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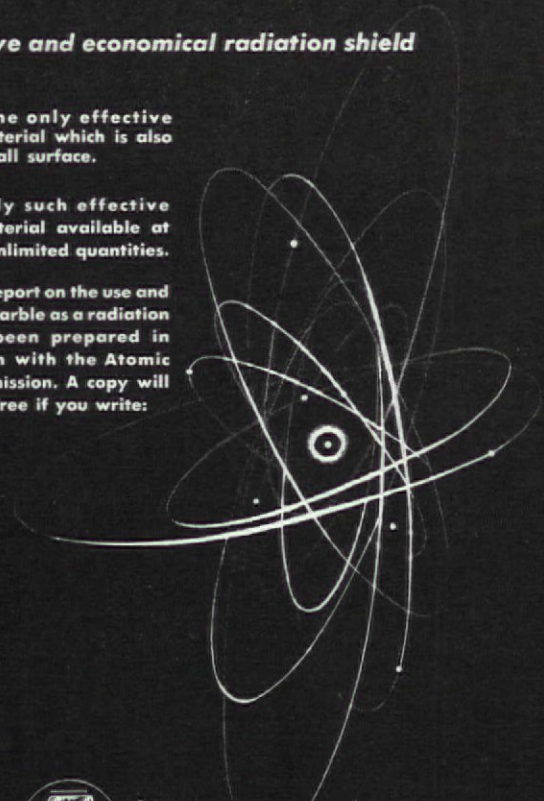
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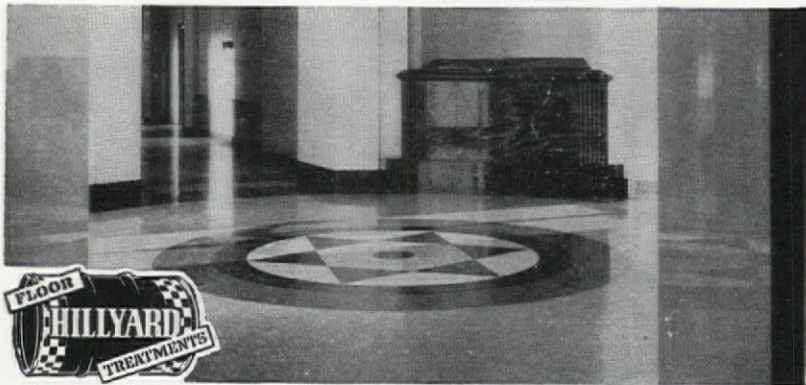
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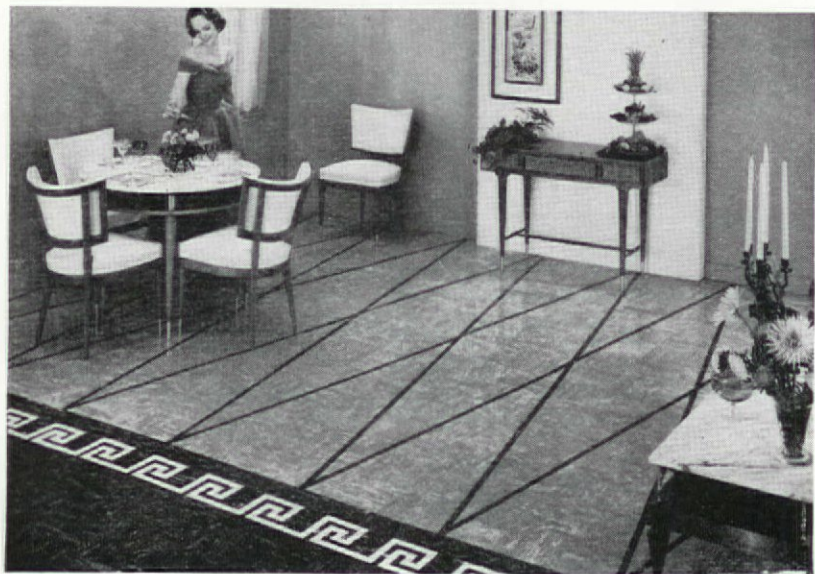
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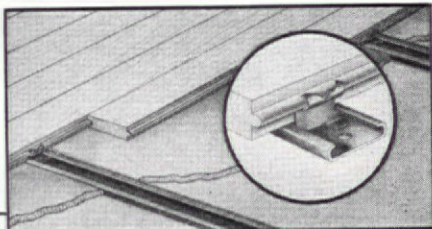
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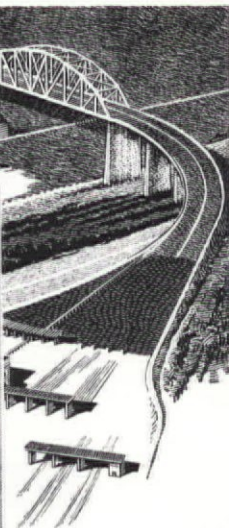
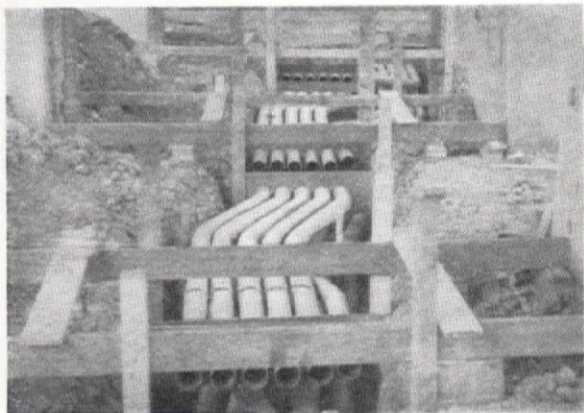


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## Italy's Wonderful New Architecture

By G. E. Kidder Smith

THE IMPACT of postwar Italy on the world of architecture is one of the most striking manifestations of the great *risorgimento* taking place in that lovely land.

The innate Italian architectural genius, which throughout 2,000 years of history has alone been a constant contributor to world culture, was wrapped far too tightly before World War II in the cocoon of fascist megalomania. But since liberation from the yoke that made everything either compulsory or forbidden, the young architects of this impoverished peninsula have enriched the world's desiccated architecture with an imagination, elegance, structural ingenuity and daring that has excited universal admiration. Indeed, one can truthfully say that the new architecture and building activity in Italy is the most vital in all Europe. Whereas the overall architectural level in countries like Sweden or Switzerland is ob-

viously higher—being in these two ball-bearing democracies the highest in the world—and whereas the new schools in England and a handful of the new churches in France are unapproached by similar structures in Italy, the Italians are giving us a joy in building, an integration of architect and artist, and a concept of concrete in structure which the rest of the designing and building world has only begun to realize was possible.

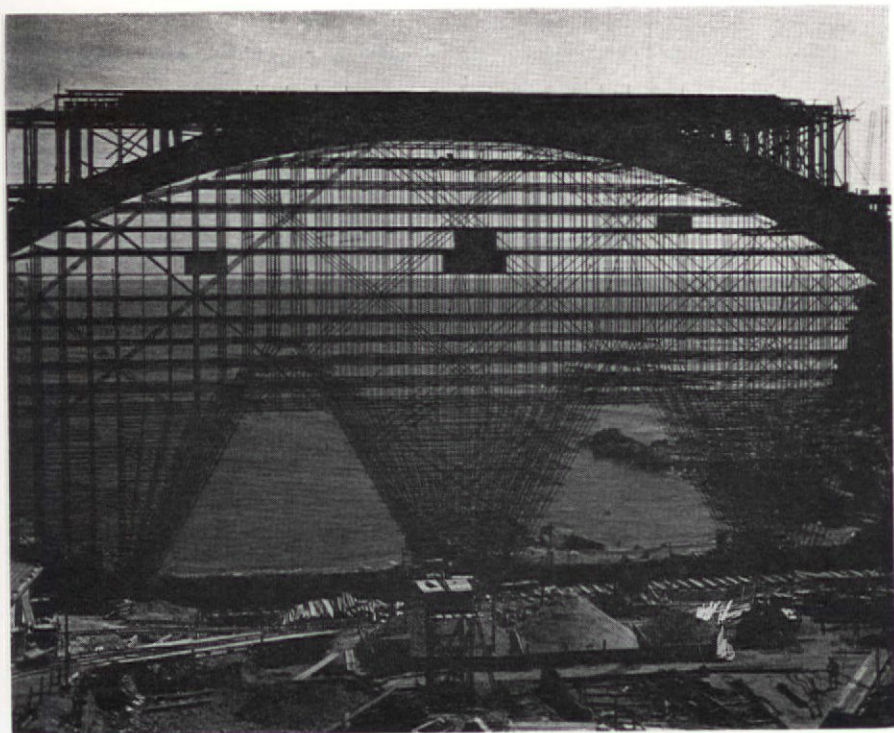
The framework and directions of the new architecture in Italy follow, as in most countries, both the characteristics of the people as individuals and the government as a corporate direction. In Italy there has been the additional influence of war's vast destruction and the emergency measures this necessitated. Housing, with very considerable ECA help from the United States, has been of paramount concern and wonders have been done to provide both urban

multi-story apartments and individual farm and rural houses. Almost all of this naturally is cast in an austerity mold, but several genuinely distinguished examples will be found, particularly in Naples, Genoa and Ivrea. This latter city, an hour north of Turin, is the home of the famous Olivetti establishment, whose typewriters and business machines are known the world over. Olivetti's attention to its products (it is the largest such business in Europe) is matched by its solicitude for its personnel, and it has erected some of the country's finest workers' housing. Too often in Italy (and indeed, the Continent) the chasm between employer and employee is astronomic, and the concern of the former for the latter microscopic.

Along with the fine low-cost housing developments will be found a housing paradox which well illustrates another facet of the Italian personality and sociological pattern: the rampantly individualistic luxury apartments, typical of the Parioli section of Rome, but also perched in other suburbs and cities of pretension. The Bruno Buoizzi district in Rome has the most fantastic collection of new flats to be found in the world. Almost all of this

kind of work, whether in overcrowded Rome or elsewhere, represents the overly decorated, overly complicated, impossibly pretentious Hollywood wing of the new Italian building. In addition, the lack of virtually any planning regulations or restraints in these new developments has so blighted Rome's fashionable north end that the surrounding *campagna* has been raped in an orgy of speculative building. Lack of effective planning legislation — however much this lack might be expected in a country of individualists — is the blackest mark in the Italian architectural notebook. The Italians have the world's most superb planning journal in *Urbanistica*, but there is a shocking gap between the ideals of the few and the "legalized" rapacity of the many.

Two other weaknesses in the new Italian architecture should also be mentioned. From the design point of view there is not a distinguished school in the country, nor, in the capital of Catholicism, is there a first-rate new church. This latter contrasts pointedly with neighboring Switzerland (which has the world's finest new churches, both Catholic and Protestant), and with France which has done so much lately in inte-



*Photograph by G. E. Kidder Smith*

#### BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION NEAR LIVORNO (LEGHORN)

grating twentieth-century church architecture with twentieth-century church art.

However, in religious memorials and tombs—those facets of architecture which might be said to be nearest sculpture—the Italians are by far and away the most advanced to be found. Their war memorials, particularly the superbly understated Ardeatine

Caves near Rome, are magnificent testimonials in one of architecture's and art's most difficult expressions. Since the days of the Renaissance—which Italy in its re-discovery of the individual gave to the world—the ability of architects to sculpt or understand sculpture in architecture, and of sculptors to design or understand architecture, has prospered in Italy as

in no other country. Michelangelo, that titan of the sixteenth century, and Bernini and Borromini, the two great rivals and geniuses of the sixteenth, are only the first three who come to mind as masters in creating three-dimensional delimited space in stone and of stone. Today, their heirs in the integration of the visual arts are producing works which the rest of mankind gladly accepts with exalted admiration. We in the United States especially have much to learn as we grope towards a greater appreciation of the part sculpture, murals and mosaics can and should play in our buildings.

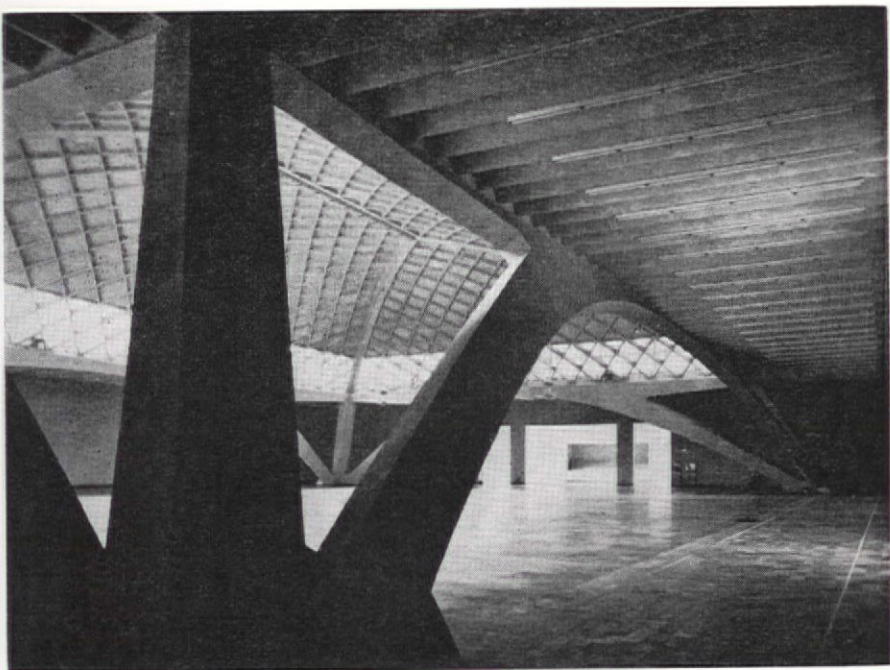


In exhibitions, too, the Italians have lessons for all of us, for they combine an imagination, a sprightliness and a delight which the more serious, self-important North might like to feel but cannot express. Italian exhibition design is ever full of spontaneous and three-dimensional pleasures. At the Ninth Triennale in Milan, Ernesto Rogers, the famous architect and editor, did a one-room show called "Architecture Is the Measure of Man." Pictures were hung from the ceiling, suspended with

wires at various complementary angles, and propped up from the floor so that the spectator had to penetrate the panels, be engulfed by them, and thus made to participate in the exhibition. Here were no neat pictures neatly tacked to the walls; indeed, the walls were the only places where pictures were not!

Shops, also being, it might be said, little exhibitions, are often full of a sophisticated, hand-turned elegance which makes our stock interiors and fluorescent fixtures crude by comparison. And almost every self-respecting shop and bar has its own mosaics (a medium increasingly favored), specially designed glass, murals or sculpture. The idea of not calling in the artist to collaborate with the architect is unthinkable. In a tiny butcher shop in Rome I saw a first-rate mosaic, and outside the village of Bassano the local Esso station sports an impressively accomplished life-sized Saint Christopher! Must our local philistinism in similar commercial ventures continue forever, or can we look a little more closely at the beauties one can find every day in Italy when buying one's pork chops, drinking one's *espresso*, or changing one's oil?





*Photograph by G. E. Kidder Smith*

EXHIBITION HALL, TURIN  
PIER LUIGI NERVI, ARCHITECT

But the greatest glories of the new Italian architecture lie in buildings such as the superb new station in Rome, which is without question the finest in Europe, and, very particularly indeed, in the breathtaking works of Pier Luigi Nervi, the greatest architectural-engineer of the twentieth century. Nervi takes reinforced concrete to lyric and expressive heights which dazzle one with

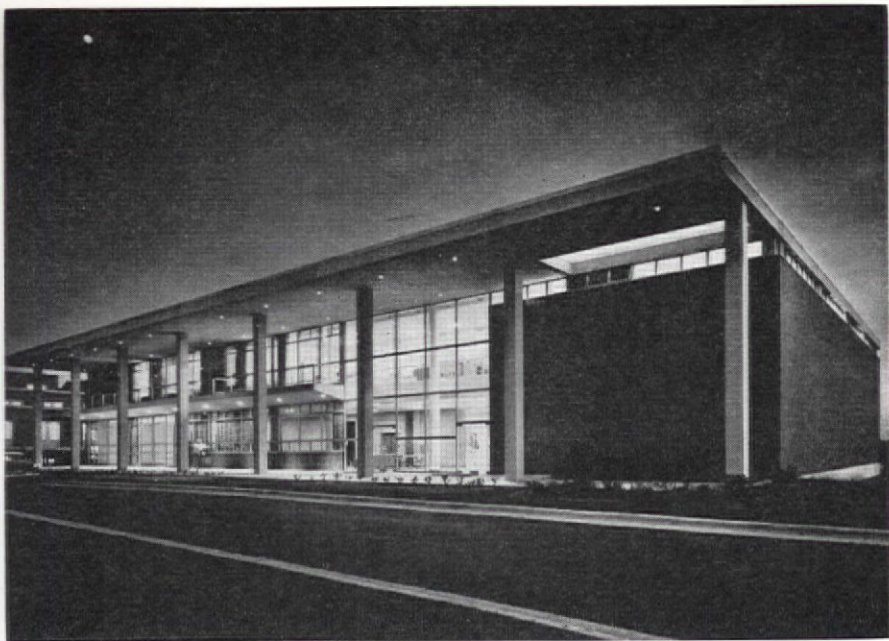
their incredible daring and virtuosity. Here is no simple stirring of cement, sand, pebbles and reinforcing, but poetry in man's conquest of space. Here reinforced from the box-like forms and right-angles which characterized most of its first hundred years (its centenary was celebrated recently), and by Nervi given a morphology which almost exactly expresses the invisible stresses and strains to

which its structure is subject. Actually many of Nervi's concrete designs are so "natural" in their biologic expression that they seem like nothing so much as the under-structure of the gigantic Victoria Regia water lily. And yet most of Nervi's great commissions have been awarded him, not because of their beauty and mastery of space, but because he and his constructing firm of Nervi and Bartoli can cover more square meters better, quicker and at less cost than anyone else in Europe. His impressive parabolic salt storage warehouse for the government at Tortona, his tobacco warehouse in Bologna which utilized a novel travelling formwork on rails, his extraordinarily daring airplane hangars built during the war, the breathtaking new exhibition halls in Turin—all these were given Nervi without thought of the esthetic impact which they were destined to produce: he got the jobs because his completely new conceptions of reinforced concrete revolutionized not only the shapes but the economy of building in our time. It is for us as spectators, however, to marvel at these wond-

rous spaces, spaces which at Turin stun with their impact, while at Chianciano Spa we dance under an enormous helianthus which hovers weightlessly above and tells us graphically that the new Italy has given the world a new era of architectural conception.



The Romans, two millenia ago, began this heritage but Italian genius did not let it expire—as the ancient Egyptians and Greeks did their great cultures—and to the same concrete that the old Romans first hurled across then unheard-of spaces, the new Romans in Nervi have added steel bars and wire mesh and accomplished an equal miracle. When Nervi's works are added to the lively contributions of his cohorts, and the whole is counterpointed by seductive glories of all ages on every side, nestled in a countryside which knows no equal, bathed by a light that seemingly glows twenty-four hours a day, and maintained by a people of bewitching charm, is there little wonder that Italy today is the mecca of all interested in bettering the visual world?



*Photograph by Joseph W. Molitor*

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## Learning to Be the President

*By George Bain Cummings, FAIA*

LAST MONTH I wrote that in a later communication I'd like to tell you what the President has learned on his visits to the Regional Conferences. By this time these travels have taken him to the annual mid-summer conference of the Michigan Society of Architects, to the annual conference of the Northwest Regional District, to a meeting of the Philadelphia Chapter, to the annual convention of the California Council of Architects combined with the conference of the California-Nevada-Hawaii Regional District, to the annual conference of the Gulf States Regional District, to the annual convention of the New York State Association of Architects (in effect a regional conference), to the annual conference of the Central States Regional District, to the annual convention of the Architects Society of Ohio combined with the fall conference of the Great Lakes Regional District, to the annual convention of the Texas Society of Architects (in effect a regional conference), to a Seminar on Secondary Schools sponsored by the New England

Regional Council, and to the annual convention of the Florida Association of Architects. Thus far he has visited in ten of the twelve regional districts, and has been privileged to meet at least a quarter of our membership.

Before I summarize what I have gleaned from all this rich experience, let's set up the frame of reference. The By-laws state: "In order to forward the objects of the Institute, unify its efforts, and better administer its affairs in the various parts of its domain and to coordinate and combine the efforts of its members within the several parts, the Board shall divide the domain of the Institute into districts, each of which shall be known as a Regional District . . . The Institute shall function in local areas or on a state-wide basis through organizations known as Chapters, . . . the objects and purposes of which shall be substantially identical with those of the Institute . . . Every chapter shall cooperate with its state organization to forward the interests of the Institute . . . On state matters, the Institute shall function through

state organizations, . . . the objects and purposes of which shall be identical with those of the Institute . . . Where only one chapter is chartered within a state, its functions and duties shall include those of both the chapter and the state organization."



The foregoing quotations set forth succinctly the pattern of unified organization, the purpose of which is to forward the objects of the Institute. So once again let's set down the stated Objects: "The objects of The American Institute of Architects shall be to organize and unite in fellowship the architects of the United States of America; to combine their efforts so as to promote the esthetic, scientific, and practical efficiency of the profession; to advance the science and art of planning and building by advancing the standards of architectural education, training, and practice; to coordinate the building industry and the profession of architecture to insure the advancement of the living standards of our people through their improved environment; and to make the profession of ever-increasing service to society." In the Articles of Incorporation

dated April 13, 1857, the founders summarized the above by the simple declaration that "The object of this Society is to elevate the architectural profession as such, and to perfect its members practically and scientifically."

Against this frame of reference, how have the meetings I have attended forwarded the objects of the Institute?

Item—By presenting exhibits of the work of the architects of the region, affording them the opportunity to compare and discuss their own work and that of their colleagues within a geographic area in which problems are common. Some of these exhibits were of outstanding quality, and could not fail to stimulate better design and service.

Item—By presenting seminars and panel discussion—often with invited speakers—affording opportunity for give and take, questions and answers, swapping experience, sharing new knowledge. At the Cambridge seminar on secondary schools, half of the audience were school people.

Item—By presenting worthwhile talks by respected architects such as Nat Owings, Hugh Stubbins, Minoru Yamasaki—to mention but a few—particularly ap-

preciated by the younger practitioners, and inspiring and helpful to all.

Item—By listening to Walter Taylor's message on the importance of continuing our personal education, and citing ways and means for doing so. In some instances the concurrent meeting of a national committee afforded further educational opportunity.

Item—By conducting the necessary business of the meeting efficiently and productively. Perhaps it's because our work is booming, but I notice little of the old griping and much more of constructive thinking and action.

Item—By inviting the attendance of students and young men of the region, and showing exhibits of student work. At many meetings awards, prizes and scholarships were presented to these men to whom belongs the future of the Institute and the profession. For the first time, the New York State Association of Architects entertained nearly one hundred students from the schools of architecture of the State at its convention—with electrifying result. The feature will become a regular part of the annual program.

Item—By commending outstanding performance—on the

part of architects in practice or as citizens in fields other than professional, and on the part of building craftsmen and others outside the profession. In New Orleans, for example, each chapter had selected one of its members to receive a citation for his good work as a participant in community affairs, which was presented with impressive ceremony.

Item—By cooperating with producers, contractors, engineers and other factors with whom the architect collaborates, inviting them to attend and share in the programs. We have much to learn from them, and these meetings tend to promote friendly and advantageous relations.

Item—And of at least equal importance with the others, by stimulating contacts and deepening acquaintance among the members themselves. You can't really like a man until you know him.

I think the essential purpose of meetings and conventions of the Institute is that we, the members, may meet and greet, learn and impart, discuss and decide. I have found this purpose extraordinarily well served in the meetings I have been attending. I have found essential unity in forwarding the ob-

jects of our organization, and yet great richness in diversity of methods. The regional system and the regional conference are proving themselves of great worth. Because the system is developing and evolving, it is exciting to watch. Each region may learn from the others, as we continue to advance.

Underlying our efforts must be the primary regard for the public interest. If what we do is good for the public, the profession and the Institute will be profited.

These visits have been most heartening and rewarding. The President is grateful for what he has learned.

## Richard Morris Hunt

FIRST SECRETARY AND THIRD PRESIDENT OF THE INSTITUTE

IN THREE PARTS—PART II

*By William Francklyn Paris*

In remembering the centenary of Hunt's starting to practise, it has seemed to some of us that we could not hope to improve on the biographical sketch written by the late William Francklyn Paris (1871-1954) for the *Magazine of the American Society of the French Legion of Honor*, Summer of 1952. The article also appeared in Vol. VII of "The Hall of American Artists," of which Mr. Paris was Honorary Director. Permission to reprint has graciously been given us by the Society's president, Mr. George A. Sloan.

HE RETURNED to America in 1855, a young man of twenty-eight, soundly educated in the careful European tradition, widely travelled, a student of art and architecture, philosophy and literature. He had seen the best architecture, sounded the current mood of Paris, and worked on monumental construction. None of his countrymen had ever had such a background for a career in architecture—and in that fact lay the possibility that he might have

failed completely in America. Head and shoulders above his contemporaries, he might easily have antagonized them, this foreign-trained architect, bringing his French ideas to a country sometimes suspicious of alien influences. But if he were better trained than the men he must associate with, there was nothing in his manner to suggest that superiority, and his fellow architects, feeling the genuineness of his devotion to his work, first made him welcome and

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then turned quickly to him for leadership. He was remarkably young to be offered the tribute of leadership, but if his vivacity and enthusiasm were boyish, his good sense and moderation made him seem older than he was, reliable and trustworthy.

He built a house or two in New York and Boston, then he went to Washington where Thomas U. Walter was engaged in enlarging the Capitol. The ease with which he found interesting work distracted him from the tentative notion he and William had had of establishing a school of art and architecture somewhere in the United States, but when he returned to New York in 1857 he opened an office which, for all practical purposes, was actually a school, the country's first atelier.

The first place in the United States to offer first-rate training to young architects, Hunt's office was immediately popular. Henry Van Brunt transferred there after studying for a year in a Boston office and George B. Post came in, bringing his diploma from New York University's course in civil engineering. Furness of Philadelphia joined them and Gambrill and William Ware who was one

day to assist in founding the architectural courses of both Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Columbia University. Hunt taught as he himself had been taught at the Beaux-Arts and he counselled his young men not to accept him as a final authority, but to go to Europe, to seek the inspiration of the European atmosphere, to broaden themselves with travel and study. Study, study, and more study, he advised them; learn the rules and respect them after you have learned them. To young Americans surrounded by all manner of strangely designed buildings he taught the lessons of proportion, of appropriateness, of care and moderation in design. He showed them the falseness of the popular American Gothic where ornate decoration concealed weak lines and no one troubled over basic design if enough weird gables and carved porches concealed it. "Just because you know someone who can carve, doesn't mean that you must employ him," he told them. These were mild lessons in the academic tradition, but in America where for a quarter century—since the Greek Revival had lost its power—architecture had lacked moderation as much as it did taste, the

counsel of Hunt was almost revolutionary.

He insisted upon excellent design, logically based, calmly thought out, and he was emphatic upon the dangers of eccentricity, but he made no attempt to force acceptance of any particular style. He was a teacher, not a dictator, and when young men went out of his office they were free to experiment on any style they fancied. Gambrell was later a partner of Richardson; Furness proclaimed to the world that "only the Greeks knew how to build"; Post, whose eminence in his profession was founded rather upon engineering genius than upon skill in design, was eclectic, as was Van Brunt whose Kansas City firm was for years the best known west of Chicago. The young men from Hunt's atelier learned sound principles; the rest was up to them.

He taught sound principles and he worked for the sound organization of his profession. The first year he was regularly established in New York, 1857, was a notable one for architects, the year that The American Institute of Architects came into existence. Thirteen men assembled in Richard Upjohn's office, organized themselves into a local society,

elected Upjohn president and Hunt secretary, and sent out a call to other architects in the city to join them. No one worked more actively for the development of the Institute than Hunt. Many of the early meetings were held in his office; many of the New York men who were persuaded to join did so because of the persuasiveness with which Hunt set forth the advantages of organization.



The Institute bound together in unity men who had been making a single-handed fight—if they fought at all—to establish their position. It formulated procedures and practices for the profession which gave new strength in business dealings; it offered opportunity for the interchange of ideas, so essential in a country barren of art and confused in taste; it established an information center for architects who needed it in a country without architectural schools or libraries; and, in serving the practical and artistic needs of the architect, it brought him in contact with his colleagues. Through the artistic wilderness which was the America of the 'fifties the architect need no longer

grope a solitary way; there were companions at hand and there was a new sense of fellowship which could not fail to raise the level of performance.

Hunt was the first secretary of the Institute and its chief propagandist; in later years, after it had become a national institution, he was its president and always, as McKim wrote, he was the man who "held aloft its banner and fought its battles for nearly a half century."

In working to help men in his own immediate profession he did not forget those in allied fields. The number of young artists and sculptors who owed their first important commissions to Hunt is a testimony of his interest in everything connected with art. He was on the alert for promising artists; when he found them his encouragement was along the practical lines of work on the great mansions he was always designing. He discovered young Karl Bitter, the Austrian, offered him commissions and engaged him to do sculptural work for the Chicago World's Fair; he saw merit in the painting of William De L. Dodge and commissioned him to do work on the dome of the Administration Building at the World's Fair.

When his protégés succeeded, he was as pleased as when the architects he had helped became noted in their own right.

In his later years, after collegiate courses in architecture became available, he gave up his atelier, but he did not abandon his interest in anyone who had worked with him or who needed help, and he was always available when anything of interest to his profession was under consideration. He was one of the founders of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and one of the committee which commissioned its first home, although he himself had nothing to do with the actual design. When, after the Chicago World's Fair, McKim set about fulfilling his pet project of the American Academy in Rome, he turned at once to Hunt, consulting him on every step of the organizing work, persuading him to act as chairman and as presiding officer at the initial meetings. "We *must* have you," McKim told him. "You are pioneer, missionary, and general slugger. No one else can win us support so quickly and completely." "Pioneer, missionary, and general slugger" to a profession for forty years—the language is perhaps not overelegant,

but the work of Hunt is there summarized.

He was teacher and organizer, mold of taste and promoter of all that concerned the arts. He was also, one must not forget, an architect, and in his last twenty years more in demand by wealthy Americans than any other man in the field. He counselled younger architects to obey the basic laws of architecture, to study the past, to mold their own style on a firm foundation of principle, to consider each problem carefully on its own merits and requirements. What he counselled, he practised. In his own work he was conservative, but alive, full of vitality; he was not imaginative, but he was thoughtful; he was academic, but his adaptations were neither dully sterile nor imitative. He worked in a country where his greatest rival in prestige was the only other man of his generation who had graduated from the Beaux-Arts—H. H. Richardson. The difference between the two is striking in their architectural design, perhaps no less so in their influence. Richardson had original genius; Hunt, scholarly understanding of his profession and taste in adapting the principles he so thoroughly understood to existing problems. Rich-

ardson took the Romanesque and molded it into something which was American *Richardsonesque*, a personal style which no one could successfully imitate—although the imitators darkened the American landscape with their efforts for a quarter century; Hunt's work did not generate enthusiastic disciples and there was no school of architecture which called him its father, but there was a whole generation who, because of his influence, knew the principles of design and made America the richer for their understanding. In the history of American architecture, Richardson is incomparably the more exciting figure, but, in the end, it is quite possible that Hunt was the greater force not only for good taste but also for artistic freedom.

And he built structures which were as beautiful as they were architecturally correct. In his earlier years he showed a tendency toward simple lines and a minimum of decoration. In that vein he did several commercial buildings in New York City: the Tribune Building, the city's first elevator structure, the Guernsey Building on lower Broadway, the Iron Exchange on Cortland Street. Successful with the Tribune Building, he was commissioned to do the

city's first elevator apartment house, the Stuyvesant on East 18th Street.

To the same early period of simple, tasteful building belongs the Lenox Library on upper Fifth Avenue. Well proportioned, it was plain to the point of austerity, but if its neo-Grec looked cold to Americans accustomed to over-ornamentation, it was dignified, almost noble, a tribute to its designer's careful scholarship and deep feeling. Montgomery Schuyler, the country's most discerning critic of architecture at the time, wrote that it "gave an impression of scale in which it was almost alone in New York or in the country at the time of its erection, the sense of largeness and liberality without which monumental dignity is out of question." Many of Hunt's buildings should have been preserved; none is to be mourned more sincerely than the Lenox Library.



But Hunt was not permitted to cling for long to simple, austere design. The American people yearned for ornamentation and in the '80s and '90s they had unlimited money to pay for it. Hunt's

prestige was no greater in his own profession than among society people. No other architect was so popular among them, so much in demand to design the great houses which were rapidly becoming the fashion. He had, in his early years, built cottages and small villas at Newport and other resorts. Hunt's cottages were sprightly, pleasant affairs, tasteful and unpretentious, far superior to most of the fancifully decorated villas. But he could not continue along this line. As the men who were carving great fortunes out of the expanding American economy took time off to travel abroad, they—or, more specifically, their wives—were no longer contented with villas. They saw palaces in Europe and they had the money to erect palaces in America. The era of the great town house and the pretentious country estate was at hand. Hunt knew what was wanted and, fortunately for our architecture, he had the training and experience to give American millionaires the palaces of their dreams and to create the desired pretentious piles within the boundaries of sound learning and good taste.

(To be concluded)

# Right As Wright Can Be

*By Johnny Vitruvius*

If you think it right to be so much like Wright  
You must, my son, declare all others wrong,  
For Wright maintains that he alone is right,  
This is indeed the theme of all his song.  
Therefore, if you would be as right as Wright  
You must then first, of course, declare Wright wrong.



## Honors

DEAN L. C. DILLENBACK, of Syracuse University's School of Architecture, has received a citation from Carnegie Institute of Technology's Alumni Federation for his contribution to architectural education and city planning.

THE MANUFACTURERS TRUST COMPANY, Fifth Avenue, New York, is receiving the Municipal Art Society's Plaque of Commendation for 1955. The citation reads: "The Municipal Art Society of New York has selected as an outstanding example of architecture befitting the City of New York the Fifth Avenue Branch of the Manufacturers Trust Company. Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, architects. 1955."

ARTHUR BROWN, JR., FAIA, has been honored by the California Building Industry Conference Board by receiving its 1955 Achievement Award.

WILLIAM TOBIAS ARNETT, Dean of the College of Architecture and Allied Arts, University of Florida, has been made an Honorary Member of the American Institute of Decorators.

PAUL SCHWEIKHER, Chairman of the Department of Architecture at Yale, has been appointed professional advisor for a new arts center to be built in Memphis, Tenn. He will draft requirements, select a site, and a jury will judge a competition.



GORE PLACE, WALTHAM, MASS., THE STAIRWAY  
FROM THE PAINTING BY RUTH PERKINS SAFFORD  
The house was built 1799 and rebuilt 1804-5,  
possibly by Bulfinch

# The Training of Future Architects

By *James M. Hunter*

CHAIRMAN, AIA COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

IN REPLY TO "THE NEW NCARB SYLLABUS," BY  
C. H. COWGILL IN THE SEPTEMBER, 1955, JOURNAL

MR. COWGILL'S SURPRISE at what appears to him a lack of interest on the part of the Committee on Education, regarding the latest edition of the NCARB Syllabus, seems to require a response.

In no sense is this a rebuttal to Mr. Cowgill or a criticism of his very careful analysis of the thinking expressed in regard to this Syllabus. I have too much respect for Mr. Cowgill as an architect and as an educator to find a fault with his paper.

The NCARB Syllabus is, to my thinking, a part—an important part to be sure, but only a part—of the education and testing process for the training of future architects with which we, the profession, should be concerning ourselves. It is difficult to criticize out of context, and it cannot be done until larger issues are resolved and the NCARB Syllabus comes into focus with the full concept of architectural education and training.

It would appear to me that the whole process is due for an "overhaul," not a revolution, but a thoughtful and far reaching investigation of the entire process, from the future architect's senior year in high school, through his acceptance by the profession as a fellow practitioner. Actually the process should begin earlier in terms of recruitment and extend later in terms of refresher and seminar courses for the practitioner.

The young man's welfare during this full ten-year period of his life is involved with the rigid disciplines of theoretical and academic schooling, the development of professional judgment, the indoctrination into professional ethics and conduct, and finally the testing to insure that he is safe to impose on an all too gullible public.

It would be interesting to wipe the slate and start all over again but, regardless of how intriguing the idea, it would lose the benefit of experience and the control of agencies and laws already set up



for the purpose. These are good machines, good devices, now honestly and diligently utilized, but I feel that they need an overhaul.

Of the agencies dedicated to this purpose, the ACSA, (Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture) and the NAAB, (National Architectural Accrediting Board) are involved with the young man's theoretical and academic schooling. The NCARB (National Council of Architectural Registration Boards) and the state registration boards themselves being involved with the testing of his professional judgment and the determination of his reliability to serve the public. Between them lies the profession itself, represented organizationally by The American Institute of Architects.

Each of these agencies, in the past, has made mistakes and has, at times, been remiss in its duties. The old mentor system actually worked, on the local level, at a time when the Institute's policy, determined by the members, kept the national office from exercising any really direct influence at a local level. On the demise of the mentor system, apparently due to the depression, no effort was made by the Institute to absorb any part

of the responsibility which the old mentors exercised.

Each of the agencies has at times been cognizant of its own weaknesses and of the weaknesses of the other, but each, I am afraid, has been guilty of trying to correct the others' weaknesses by supplementing its own activity.

I see a strong tendency on the part of some of the architectural schools to attempt to turn out a "finished product," to attempt to teach academically what should be experienced under an apprenticeship system, some in the technical fields, others in the area of theory and esthetics. I see also a strong tendency on the part of architectural examining boards to re-examine the candidate in academic areas and to try to rewrite his "Senior Finals" in terms of the examiner's own collegiate training some twenty years before. I see also the profession itself being so little concerned with the man's apprenticeship that his office experience becomes barren in all areas, other than those in which he can come closest to earning his salary. So, I say, a general overhaul is necessary.

The Committee on Education, at the direction of the Board, and working within the frame of ref-

erence provided by the Survey Commission Report, has concerned itself with just such an approach. One of the first and most important steps was to get agreement between these agencies as to their areas of influence, to set up little picket fences, as it were, between the school and the profession, the profession and the examining boards in terms of contribution to be made to the young man's development.

To this end a statement was drawn up by the Committee on Education and submitted to the Board of The American Institute of Architects, to the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, to the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards and to the National Architectural Accrediting Board, for endorsement. All of these agencies whole-heartedly endorsed this statement:

A. "It is the proper function and objective of the accredited school of architecture to provide a broad educational background of general culture and technical subjects leading to a degree in architecture. To examine and evaluate the candidate in these courses, to provide an atmosphere conducive to the development of a professional attitude and a realization of the need

for the experience of the architect-in-training program as preparation for a full professional practice.

B. "It is the proper function, responsibility and duty of the profession to provide a program of guided apprenticeship, take cognizance of the candidate training program, and make available to him opportunities for experience in all areas of practice.

C. "It is the proper function and objective of the state examining board to evaluate the experience, knowledge and judgment gained under the architect-in-training program and to examine the candidate, confining the limit and extent of the examination to the application of his education, to the professional pattern of practice with the objective of determining his professional judgment, competence to serve his client, the public, and his profession."

With such a credo as a frame of reference then, it becomes off limits, in my judgment, for an examining board to ask the candidate to develop the "flexure formula," but certainly right and proper to ask him to design a structural system for a building, and to grade him on his ability to do it—but

not on *how* he did it. Conversely, it would seem to me that it should be off limits for the accredited school of architecture to try to firm up too quickly design philosophies and their involvements with construction judgments during the period of academic training, and to thus *produce a "hot-house architect," top-heavy with philosophical chlorophyll and with a weak root structure in experience.*

No one can avoid developing a philosophy and no effort should be made to prevent such development. The ideal product would be a young man with well developed mental muscles, an insatiable curiosity and a certain humility and tolerance, and especially the ability to do adventuresome thinking, together with capacity for highly critical evaluation of that thinking.

Obviously the unknown and a most essential factor in the entire process is the Architect-In-Training Program, and the Institute's handling of it.

We, of the Committee on Education, are apprehensive and concerned and humble about our efforts to organize this program, which will be launched very shortly as a guinea-pig run in three

states. We have hoped, in organizing the program and in writing the Log Book, to provide a means by which the candidate may train himself.

We have assumed the candidate to be of mature mind, capable of research and capable of learning vicariously from the experiences of his employment, and so we have provided him devices by which he himself can evaluate his own experience in terms of "type of work," "size of project" and "building type" with which he is involved; these in terms of actual man-hours spent in each of these activities, and keyed to his employer's AIA bookkeeping system. We have attempted also to provide him with the ways and means of obtaining information from the construction world pertinent to the development of his professional judgment and ability. As a device for the organization of such material, we have actually used the broad headings of the NCARB Syllabus, and have provided in looseleaf form the actual material or, if too bulky, a brief description of the type of material to be obtained from all of the trade agencies, such as the American Society for Testing Materials, National Fire Protection Association, Pro-

ducers Council, American Standards Association, etc.

In addition to these, the documents of The American Institute of Architects governing professional practice, book lists, including descriptions of the text material which he might find valuable, etc.

The program is to be administered through the Education Committee of the local AIA chapter, with the requirement that the candidate confer once each year with the dean of the architectural school from which he graduated or with the chairman of the Education Committee of his local chapter for an evaluation of what he has been doing in terms of breadth and desirability of experience, and the responsibilities he has been afforded.

This effort, we feel sure, is incomplete, and in need of constant supervision and revision of the materials presented. So we want the "guinea-pig run" for a reasonable testing period, after which the candidates themselves will be canvassed for discussion of the merits and deficiencies of the system.



This then, is the device by which the Architect-In-Training Program will be launched.

I have not mentioned the employer. Here, in our judgment, lies the unknown, the profession itself. The employer of this young man must take a real and personal interest in him and in the experience he is getting. He must make available to him, either directly or vicariously, the experiences of the office with which they are both associated. The employer's attitude must not be one of the "benevolent patron," reminiscing his own schooling and early struggle with professional problems, but one of thoughtful cooperation in permitting the young man opportunity for experience in all areas, by the planning of the work program so that such opportunity can be made available to him. On the other hand, the candidate must not expect to be treated like a prima donna. He must realize that he must *earn his way* in a highly competitive profession, and that his pay check *will* be directly proportional to the economic good he can create, regardless of any system which could be devised for apprenticeship.

The candidate should expect of his profession during the Architect-In-Training Program no better treatment than the medical profession affords the medical in-

terne. He must take a realistic approach, a humble attitude toward his goal.

So, I am not surprised that the members of the Committee on Education found so little to criticize in the NCARB Syllabus. They were, I am sure, as I was, confining their criticism to the Syllabus as it applies to *the status quo* and could not honestly criticize it in

what it should be if the Architect-In-Training Program works as it is hoped it will work. We were, you see, involved with two sets of standards. Mr. Cowgill can expect a great deal of criticism, perhaps, of its next edition, and we in turn hope for criticism of the Architect-In-Training Program in return. There is a coordinating job to do over the next few years that cannot be shirked.

## Architecture as a Science and Architecture as an Art

IN TWO PARTS—PART II

By *J. Bronowski, M. A., Ph. D.*

A paper read before the R.I.B.A. March 1, 1955, offering a new viewpoint about architecture, esthetics and architectural training. Reprinted in part by permission from the *Journal of the R.I.B.A.*

I HOPE that it is now becoming clear of itself why I chose to present this theory of esthetics in the context of architecture. For I know no other work of man which is so profoundly a balance—no, a fusion—of freedom and necessity. The task of the architect is to design a shelter, as the task of the locksmith is to fasten it; and both are contained by the materials which they can use. Yet architecture has evolved for this circumscribed task a bold and rich imag-

ination, refreshed in each change of society, of which no other craft has a hint. The buildings of the great designers arch out of their materials as spontaneously as a fountain.

Think back through the revolutions in architecture. Gothic in France in the twelfth century begins at once with the rib-vault and the buttress, and for three hundred years is a constant play in the freedom (and the limitations) which these engineering devices

give. They are means which, as it were, open space vertically; when that no longer yielded anything new, the Renaissance suddenly abandoned it and opened the space horizontally. The building in which Brunelleschi made this pioneer change in 1419, the Foundling Hospital in Florence, is to me still the most beautiful in the world.

A horizontal building (if I may speak of architecture in my own way) is not held to a single line of sight, and must therefore guide our attention by its organization of detail. For me, this articulation of parts, this search for organic structure, runs through the Renaissance. It floods into Baroque and exhausts itself there, because it had reached the limits of what seventeenth-century materials could sustain—what would Balthasar Neumann have given for steel joists and pre-stressed concrete!

The next revolution begins at a new problem: domestic needs in the climate of Paris and further north. It comes to life, I think, in the work of Christopher Wren at Oxford and Cambridge, and of his colleague Robert Hooke in the re-building of London after the fire. What is best in the eight-

eenth century stems from their invention; and moreover, Wren's bold, almost impertinent conceptions (the place of the lantern on the Sheldonian, for instance) have a kinship with those casual, peremptory innovations of iron and glass which stand alone in the architecture of the nineteenth century.

I want to stop at Christopher Wren and Robert Hooke, however, because they give flesh, symbolically, to an issue which is central to architecture now, and indeed to our culture. Neither was trained as an architect. This of course was not new; none of the pioneers of the Renaissance was an architect either. Brunelleschi was a goldsmith, Bramante was a painter, and even later Bernini was a sculptor and Inigo Jones a designer for the stage. They were however professional artists; but Wren and Hooke were not even that. Both were by profession scientists, and were at the center of scientific life. It was at the end of a lecture on astronomy by Wren on 28 November 1660 that the Royal Society was founded, and Hooke became responsible for the experiments at its meetings soon after. Twenty-four years

later, amid their building plans, Wren was still arguing with Hooke about science, and the outcome of one dispute was that they sent Halley off to Cambridge to ask Newton a critical question on gravitation. Newton had worked out the answer years before, but when Halley arrived he could not put his hand on it. He began to write out afresh, and ended by writing the *Principia*.

I quote these incidents in order to make clear that Wren and Hooke were not minor figures; in the age of greatest scientific speculation before our own, their minds marched with the leaders. Hooke's neglected reputation in science is now reviving, but he remains unlucky in his architectural work because hardly any of it has survived; or if it has, like the Monument (which he built) it does not go by his name. These two springing minds rebuilt London; was their architecture original because they were scientists, or in spite of it?

This is the type of question which now troubles all serious artists. The easy answer, of course, is to give science a sort of kitchen-maid's place; in architecture, to let her supply the materials and

techniques, and to begin the creative work only when the skeleton has been fixed by some handbook engineer armed with the codes of practice. Gilbert Scott put this view baldly when he said that "architecture is decoration of construction," and his own work is a noisy witness to the consequences of this definition of architecture as schizophrenia. But the view (and its disasters) has not died with Gilbert Scott.

On this mistaken view, science is thought to fix what I called the limits or constraints within which art works; and art is the defiant gesture of freedom, pinning plaster rosettes to the building in spite of the engineer. Science is thought at work from year to year, calculating the right stresses and dimensions for a building more closely, until one day it will have narrowed the tolerances to nothing at all. The building will be determined by calculation; nothing any longer will be open to choice, and therefore freedom and with it art will be at an end.

No one can hold this foolish view while he is standing in front of a building by Wren or his associates. On the contrary, in them the new knowledge of mechanics was plainly a liberation of imag-

ination, and not a restriction. In what way, then, is this plausible interpretation of my esthetic at fault?

Its grave fault is that it pictures art and science, not merely as different skills, but as different temperaments, which must inhabit different men. From the moment that you, the architect, consent to take the structural engineering from someone else, the building is doomed. There are no composite works of art, not even in the cave-paintings or the ballads; you can no more make a building in which someone else (a man or a textbook) puts the joists than you can write a poem and have someone else put in the rhymes. For knowledge which another man supplies is always a constraint; but every addition to your own knowledge is a liberation.

Every building is an invention, no less and no more. It begins with a problem, which has nothing to do with the look, the construction or the layout of the building, but asks something more searching: how should the activity which the building is to house be carried out? If the architect is not asked to help think this out, he will build what Britain is now full of: office blocks which are (I

know no exception) meaningless rows of holes linked by tunnels; power stations and town halls which are indistinguishable; and vistas of semi-detached houses which (though they may be poured in concrete or assembled from panels) differ from their Victorian models only because it is now too dear to dig out a basement. Ride the lifts in Broadcasting House, go to bed in any hospital, drop in to a prefabricated post-war villa for tea, and ask yourself whether the architect was consulted on how the work there could be made to flow.

He was not; but then, has he earned the right to be consulted? This country is already building the world's first atomic power stations, and the designs which have been published show that they put many exciting problems. Alas, the designs also show that once again they have been solved in the conventions of Battersea and Western Avenue. But what architect today knows enough science to be able to think himself into the new processes, and invent an organic plan? Wren and Hooke would not have muffed this chance.

Or take a simpler contemporary issue: the housing estate. The main problem in house building in this country is the mass production



of sub-units. What architect has studied this at first hand where it has been solved, in the component and sub-assembly factories of the Detroit automobile industry? What young architect has fitted himself by research to tackle the central heating of the small house, or that other weak unit, the water and waste system?



The health—yes, the beauty—of architecture hangs on seeing your vocation in this way. Architecture is not decoration, and it is not a jigsaw of technical tricks. A building is not a beautiful shell, and neither is it a functional shed. A building is the coherent solution of a problem in living. In that profound sense, a building is an invention, and all architecture is invention. Some of the most original architecture today is surely in Italian dams, in Swiss bridges, and in oddities like the Dome of Discovery. Wren and Hooke would have delighted in these problems; and like them, the architect must fit himself for solving all parts of the work in his own person. His invention is only free when it rises out of his own scientific, as strongly as out of his artistic, imagination.

What I have been putting to you is the central issue of our age. We all hanker for beauty expressed as freedom of choice, because freedom (this is the crux of my esthetic) is an emotional need as real as the physical need for rest, comfort and gadgets. We all fear and feel the constriction of a uniform society and a threatening world. This tension is as old as man, and gives his thought its spring, its creative invention, in art and science together.

But now our generation has begun to make a dangerous distinction; it has separated these two modes of original thought, and identified art with freedom and science with its inevitable limitations. This identification is false, as I have shown in architecture. It is unhealthy for the artist, because it makes him narrow and the public taste narrow—but, alas, a century apart. It is bad for the scientist, whom it makes dictatorial, irresponsible and philistine. And it is a disaster for mankind.

For a society is as balanced as a building is. We must not fall into the trap of parcelling out either between two minds: between the architect and the engineer, or between the statesman and the scientist. The statesman cannot

create a policy if he simply accepts the sanctions from the nuclear physicist. Statesmanship without scientific vision, even citizenship without it, is (like bad architecture) a mere decoration of acquiescence.

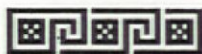
The danger is that we take our positive policy from the past, and use modern science only negatively to protect that. This would indeed debase science into an obstacle and not an instrument of personal freedom. And this abuse faces us with physical destruction and, what is as threatening, with a moral revulsion against science throughout the West. Our populations have begun to fear science instead of to learn it; if this goes on, we are doomed. For societies are not bound to go forward, from freedom to greater freedom. Greece fell, and Rome, and the world was a darker place for at least a thousand years. God has not insured civilization against the fear of His gift of reason.

We can heal these divisions only in creative work—taking pleasure in our freedom and exploring it to its limits. In our age, we have not begun to reach these limits, and

certainly they are not set by science. On the contrary, the constraints which we accept are still the conventions of the past, dead styles and ancient policies. Everything new that we learn, in science as in art, gives us confidence and freedom to break through these constraints. But we have to learn it for ourselves, in our own person and experience.



In the intellectual revolutions of the past, architecture has been a point of fusion—the most sensitive point at which new ideas in science and a new conception of the arts have crossed and influenced one another. Men have learned both, unconsciously, from the daily sight of great buildings. Today the architect bears the same responsibility for making science as well as art visible and familiar, and for having each influence and enter into the other. Architecture remains the crossroads of new science and new art. If the architect is willing to make them one, by learning to live naturally in both, there will at last be fine modern buildings, and citizens wise enough to see that they survive.





THE LION GATE OF MYCENAE, FROM THE INSIDE

The Citadel of Mycenae and the Argolid in the distance

Photograph by Peter Frantz, Saginaw, Mich.

# Our Profession—Its Place in America's Future

IN TWO PARTS—PART II

By *Edmund R. Purves*, FAIA

An address before the Northwest Regional  
Council, Glacier Park, Mont., Sept. 9-11, 1955

**B**UT LET US TURN now to another phase of the Federal Government, the administrative agencies—one in which we can be effective so long as we maintain ourselves an organization of prestige and avoid those tactics which are commonly ascribed to pressure operations in Washington.

We must play our cards like able gentlemen and at the same time realize that other people play their cards cleverly. And sometimes they are more experienced card players than we are.

We also have made a real impact for good on the national policies of this country. Several years ago, for instance, General Fleming, then administrator of the Federal Works Agency, asked Larry Chandler of the ASCE, Dick Gray of the American Federation of Labor, and myself to study the question of using public works to offset a depression. We made the study and wrote our report, which

was to the effect that it is rather silly to attempt to use public works to offset a depression. Our report was turned over to the Federal Works Administrator and we were both amazed and delighted when we read that President Truman's message to Congress on the state of the nation included three of our principal paragraphs verbatim.

Just recently, the Hoover Commission has succeeded in putting over the idea of a Coordinator of Public Works, an office that has just been officially created, though it has been unofficially in existence for a couple of years. This is a project which has been all-important to me and one which I have worked on continually. It falls well within the Institute's policies.

The American Institute of Architects was called upon to perform a most unique service for the Department of State. Through the Department of State, our

country is to erect a building in Berlin. The Department called upon us to set up an advisory committee and to select an architect for it. We are to build a structure in Berlin on the Russian boundary. The purpose is to win people to the Western way. If we are to be successful, tact and understanding will be required, for we speak from the disadvantage of affluence and material success to an audience which, though acclimated to hardship, is intellectually alert and one which has not frittered its energies and intelligence in promoting a neon architecture or a culture dependent upon TV and comics.

I think you can see that operating on the Washington scene is a life which is guided by no pattern and no precedent. And it is decidedly no place for an amateur. We are up against professionals. Practically all the staffs of the organizations in the construction industry are manned by experienced professional people such as we have at The Octagon.

Now let us look at the construction industry—that inchoate mass which has no organization at all. Maybe some day it will, but I rather doubt it. In fact there is some question as to whether it is

an industry or simply a service. We like to think of it as an industry. I will break it down into major elements for you:

In the first category is the "design element," in which we find ourselves and the engineers as represented in the ASCE and NSPE and others—about ten in all. There is an interesting thing about those two organizations—ten percent or less of the members of each organization are in, or are interested in, the construction industry. Therefore, the construction industry engineers find themselves far more sympathetic to the AIA than to their own organization. Some of them have even expressed the hope that some day there will be one single profession for the design element of the construction industry. Whether this is a good idea or not, time will tell.

Also in the design field are the American Society of Landscape Architects, the American Institute of Planners, the American Institute of Decorators, and some others.

Then there is the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, which is possibly the greatest technological force in the whole economy. Its members include those with whom we are associated

in construction, plus the whole area of transportation, power and light. It is they who are looked up to more than any other group in the United States, for they are responsible for our transportation, our recreation and our mechanical comfort.

The second element in the construction industry is the contractors, as exemplified by the AGC and the specialty contractors. Contractors enjoy considerable political power for the simple reason that so often the political bosses of the states and communities are contractors themselves and they are all members of the AGC. However, we do enjoy a peculiar dominance over the industry by reason of our position in the planning picture.

In the manufacturing end of the construction industry there is a Producers' Council. It is a creation and an affiliate of The American Institute of Architects and exists only by virtue of its contract of affiliation with us. It is made up primarily of the sales forces of the producers represented; the policy-making echelons are represented in the National Association of Manufacturers. Then there are organizations of distributors.

Now, another element of the

construction industry and possibly the real boss, the real policy determinant—the financial people. They are represented in Washington by the mortgage bankers, two building-and-loan associations, the American bankers' associations, and by the life insurance companies. They are a very potent force in the construction industry. They have billions of dollars invested in construction and many potential billions of dollars for future construction.

Another element is Labor, which is not the power it imagines itself to be. This was vividly demonstrated at the time of Truman's last election, when the leaders of the very conservative American Federation of Labor practically informed Mr. Dewey they were going to elect him to the Presidency. It is obvious from the results that the rank and file had voted for Mr. Truman.

Another element in the construction industry is, of course, the Government—and that I have already described.

There are other forces that have a voice—notably the American Legion, especially in questions of housing and hospital construction. Also the Public Works Association, U. S. Conference of May-

ors in the American Municipal Association, the Council of State Governments, and the United States Chamber of Commerce.

That is a review of the construction industry and some factors which influence it and influence your welfare and mine.

I should add that there are 16,000 trade associations in the United States, of which we are one. In the construction industry alone, BRAB says, there are 340 organizations, of which we are one. But the Construction Industry Advisory Council has really reduced that to about 100 organizations. This last is about the smallest consolidation of the construction industry which has so far been achieved.

It must be remembered that we are just one of many organizations, and to maintain our position of leadership within that gathering is no small feat. Our position has been obtained by hard, painstaking work in dealing with tangibles and intangibles.

As an instance of where others have been on the ball, following the recent floods and disasters in New England we were apprised that the National Association of Home Builders and the Associated General Contractors of America,

Inc., had jumped instantly into the breach, offering their services and sending teams into the field. Fortunately we rallied and could with dignity and relative promptness offer our services on the long-range planning problems that confronted the communities of the stricken area.

This has been a strange way, perhaps, to discuss the future—by talking about the past and the present. But after all, what is the future but the result of what we did yesterday and what we are doing today?

I have mentioned the general stated objectives of the Institute, which represents more than 75 percent of the nation's architects. We have come a great distance in the last 100 years toward attaining those objectives. Much of the credit must go to the regional organizations within the AIA. Here in the Northwest Region, for instance, you have given the profession and the nation the benefit of your magnificent development of the uses of Northwest timber, and you have been an inspiration to the rest of the nation through your development of an excellent regional architecture. The efficiency and enthusiasm of your Region

has been infectious through the AIA.



But, where do we go from here? The regions, chapters and individual members of the profession must, of course, continue to build strongly and well on the foundation which already has been laid. The Institute has—almost in its 100th year—paused to take stock of the situation and make its plans for the final push toward attainment of our goals. Late in July of this year, a new committee was formed. This Committee on the Advancement of the Profession has these duties:

“To investigate thoroughly and comprehensively the actual engagement of the architectural profession in the United States as compared to its potential engagement; to examine objectively the prestige, position and effectiveness of the profession’s national organization, The American Institute of Architects, especially with respect to its stated objects; to make recommendations to the Board of Directors looking toward the attainment, in the fullest extent and meaning, of the objects of the Institute as presently stated in the

By-laws and the attainment by the profession of the fullest exercise of its capabilities.”

I have tried to give you a picture of our present situation—the situation in which we must work to gain our aspirations. It should be perfectly clear that it is not a job for the Institute headquarters alone. The Institute is powerless without the enthusiastic cooperation of the regions, chapters and individual members. We hope we can count on that cooperation in the future as well as we have in the past. This is not a mere idle plea for a vote of confidence or a resolution lauding the effort. There are definite jobs to be done. Nineteen fifty-six will be an entire year of preparation for the centennial celebration of the AIA in 1957. A special committee in Washington is at work now making plans for the most successful exploitation of this opportunity. A great deal of the centennial activity will be handled at a regional and chapter level. It is not too early to begin making definite plans for your part in the great program. Intensify your public relations efforts—let the public know your good works. Increase your knowledge and understanding of what is going on in Washing-



ton and in other parts of the country, so you can integrate your activities. Watch the MEMO, the JOURNAL and the PUBLIC RELATIONS NEWSLETTER—they offer countless ideas and opportunities to improve your standing within

the community, and will keep you informed of centennial activities.

This is what I mean by cooperation. Only through intensive effort on the part of the individual can we, as a profession, grasp the full opportunity of our future.

## Calendar

*January 5:* Deadline for entry slips and entry fee for Institute's Program for National Honor Awards.

*January 7-February 9:* Exhibition of work of Newly-elected 1955 Fellows, The Octagon, Washington, D. C.

*January 12-19:* The Alberta Association of Architects annual roundtable gathering under the joint sponsorship of the association and the University of Alberta. Subject: "An Exploration of Architectural Ideals and New Contemporary Approaches," under the direction of Richard J. Neutra, FAIA. The Banff School of Fine Arts, Banff, Alberta, Canada.

*January 19-21:* Iowa Chapter's 1956 Convention, Hotel Savery, Des Moines, Ia.

*January 22-26:* Annual Convention and Exposition of the National Association of Home Builders, Chicago Coliseum, Chicago, Ill.

*February 27-March 1:* Annual Meeting, Board of Directors, A.I.A., The Octagon, Washington, D. C.

*April 12-14:* South Atlantic District Regional Conference, Durham, N. C.

*April 21-28:* Historic Garden Week in Virginia, the headquarters of The Garden Club of Virginia being the Jefferson Hotel, Richmond 19, Va.

*April 26-28:* Middle Atlantic Regional Conference, Dupont Hotel, Wilmington, Del.

*May 12:* Pre-Convention meeting of the Board of Directors, A.I.A., Hotel Biltmore, Los Angeles, Calif.

*May 14-17:* Design Engineering Show, Convention Hall, Philadelphia, Pa.

*May 15-18:* 88th Convention of A.I.A., Hotel Biltmore, Los Angeles, Calif.

*July 6-29:* The 5th Annual National Trust Summer School for the study of the historic houses of Great Britain. Representative for the U. S.: Frederick L. Rath, Jr., Director of the National Trust for Historic Preservation, 712 Jackson Place N.W., Washington 6, D. C.

*October 7-9:* 7th Annual Conference of the Gulf States District, Chattanooga, Tenn.

*October 10-13:* California-Nevada-Hawaii District Regional Conference, and California Council, Yosemite, Calif.

*October 18-20:* Western Mountain District Regional Conference, Salt Lake City, Utah.

*October 25-27:* New York State Association Convention, Lake Placid Club, Lake Placid, N. Y.

*October 31-November 2:* Texas District Regional Conference, Corpus Christi, Texas.

*November 14-16:* Middle Atlantic District, and Pennsylvania Society of Architects and Regional Council Conference, Hershey, Pa.



## Architects Read and Write

*Letters from readers—discussion, argumentative, corrective, even vituperative*



THAT NEW MAGAZINE

BY DON GRAF, Ossining, N.Y.

THE TEMPEST in the September JOURNAL, over Edwin Bateman Morris' franchise for a new and better magazine, prompts what I think is a basic question, in two parts—like the \$64,000 one on TV. Is architecture, as Vitruvius said, a balance of Strength, Utility and Beauty? Does the architect have five duties, as the A.I.A. Handbook says, (1) Design, (2) Specifications, (3) Office Management, (4) Engineering, (5) Supervision . . . with the concomitants of law, salesmanship, bookkeeping, psychology, ethical advertising, etc., thrown in?

Mr. Dombar says architecture is the greatest of arts without science messing it up. Thereby making a liar out of Vitruvius. But Tom Creighton gets upset

over selection of pictures, and makes out a case—if you allow for dilution of excellence with mediocrity of examples. Mr. Hamlin is also concerned with esthetics, and geography.

Do readers in 1955 still want pictures they can crib? Aren't they concerned with Strength and Utility, too? Or is it to be a diet of nothing but black caviar?

*Look* has something well balanced in it (according to the publisher) for every one in the family. Someday, somebody is going to dream up an architectural magazine that will be of interest to everyone of the 4.6 persons in the average architectural office—from errand boy and stenographer to the principals. And everyone in the family will learn about Vitruvius and what he was talking about.

THE EAST FRONT OF THE CAPITOL

BY EDWARD STEESE, Scarsdale, N. Y.

I NOTE the Institute's resolution protesting the proposed alteration to the Capitol and the Board's

instructions that this be made known to the proper congressional committees. The matter inter-

ests me particularly as, by chance, the very day I read of the appropriation, I had come across Thomas Hastings' design for the enlargement, or rather "pulling forward" of the central block; and I wonder if now the same scheme is being considered.

If so, I would hesitate to condemn it for sentimental or archaeological reasons, for it is to my mind a distinct improvement. The dome no longer sits on the central pediment, and this latter has been increased to ten columns in width, thus making it more important than the pediments of the two wings.

I am not sure when Mr. Hast-

ings developed this scheme, but I think around 1920, before I Worked for him. It was nevertheless very much in his mind a few years later, though it had been shelved on account of other remodelling of the Capitol of which I happened to be in charge (Mr. Hastings was Consulting Architect) at the office.

You may be assured of my great interest in "preservation," but I am no opponent to improvement, and if the work is carried out in the spirit of the old, I think a little face-lifting would be beneficial to the Capitol's venerable but crude design.

## Books & Bulletins

THE AMERICAN SCULPTORS SERIES. Edited by Joseph F. Morris. 60-64 pp. each book. 8½" x 11". Athens, Ga.: 1955: University of Georgia Press. \$1.50 each; \$5 set of four

Four more parts of this biographical and descriptive series are those devoted to James Earle Fraser, Donald De Lue, Julian Hoke Harris, Lee Lawrie; the latter two of which have been honored by the Institute's Fine Arts Medal. It will be recalled that

the former parts of the series are those devoted to Wheeler Williams, Paul Manship, Anna Hyatt Huntington, Daniel Chester French, Malvina Hoffman, Sidney Waugh, Herbert Haseltine, Augustus Saint-Gaudens, Jose De Creeft, Cecil Howard, C. Paul Jennewein and A. A. Weinman.

ARCHITECTURE IN THE AGE OF REASON. Baroque and Post-Baroque in England-Italy-France. By Emil Kaufman. 320 pp. Text; 64 pp. Illustrations.

6 $\frac{1}{4}$ " x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Cambridge, Mass.: 1955: Harvard University Press. \$10

Dr. Kaufman's book deals with the period lying between the Renaissance and our own day, with particular study of the idea of harmonious integration which for three hundred years haunted the minds of European architects. Joseph Hudnut says of the book: "Mr. Kaufman would send us back to Blondel that we may learn what has happened to architecture."

THE GRASS ROOTS OF ART. BY Herbert Read. 160 pp. 6" x 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". New York: 1955: George Wittenborn, Inc. \$2.50

From a series of "Problems of Contemporary Art"; the first edition of which appeared in 1946. Herbert Read's theme is "that art is in some sense intimately related, not only to the social structure, but even to the very soil and landscape of a country." In a closing paragraph he writes: "Only a people serving an apprenticeship to nature can be trusted with machines. Only such a people will so contrive and control those machines that their products are an enhancement of biological needs, and not a denial of them. Only such a people will be secure from

the debilitating effects of mass production and mass unemployment (miscalled 'leisure'). Only such a people, with sensations still vivid and intelligence ever active, can hope to form a stable and integrated society in the industrial world of the future."

LONGWOOD GARDENS. 24 pp. 7" x 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Wilmington, Del.: 1955: Longwood Foundation, Du Pont Building, Wilmington, Del. 50 cents

A souvenir pamphlet, largely in color, presenting the plan and illustrations of Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square, Pa., the estate of the late Pierre Samuel du Pont.

AMERICAN SKYLINE. By Christopher Tunnard and Henry Hope Reed. 320 pp. Text; 24 pp. Illustrations. 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". Cambridge, Mass.: 1955: The Riverside Press. \$5

A particularly timely book that looks at our national development of architecture as whole local and regional townscapes, rather than, as in most former histories, individual buildings. A well balanced survey that is a "must" for architect and layman alike.

THE INTER-UNIVERSITY CASE PROGRAM, ICP CASE SERIES: Number 26. Defending "The

Hill" Against Metal Houses. By William K. Muir, Jr., 40 pp. 8" x 10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>". University, Alabama: 1955: University of Alabama Press. 50 cents

The story of an attempt to tow prefabricated houses to West Haven, Conn., and erect them as the beginning of a housing development. Why the scheme failed is the subject of this case study.

INSIDE TODAY'S HOME. By Ray Faulkner, in collaboration with Sarah Faulkner. 668 pp. 6" x 9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>". New York: 1955: Henry Holt and Company. \$8; College price, \$6

Another volume in the growing list dealing with interior decoration for the layman's benefit. Ray Faulkner is Dean of Stanford University and also senior author of "Art Today." The book discusses the layman's problems from plan to electric switch layout, including the garden.

BEHIND THE PICTURE WINDOW. By Bernard Rudofsky. 210 pp. 5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>" x 8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>". New York: 1955: Oxford University Press. \$4

The author, who is an architect, may be remembered by his previous work—"Are Clothes Modern?", which *The New Yorker* called almost a "psychoanalysis of dress." In the same spirit he applies himself to what is called in "the orchidaceous language of builders and real estate brokers, The Home." The author defends what is perhaps an emphasis on the stomach in these words: "If kept in good repair, the human stomach is a most reliable instrument for registering intellectual sensations, and it seems to me, since the present is so hostile to the intellect, some extra attention to the stomach might help to have it in good working order for better days."

## They Say:

### Pier Luigi Nervi

*From a recent speech in London, printed in The Architects' Journal for October 20, 1955)*

I should make it clear that I both designed these works and was responsible for their construction as partner and technical director

in the firm who built them. And I must say, also, that this opportunity of uniting these two aspects of the construction process—design and execution—which have tended more and more to separate into two distinct func-

tions, has greatly contributed to any success I may have achieved . . .

I am deeply convinced—and this conviction is strengthened by a critical appraisal of the most significant architectural works of the past as well as of the present—that the outward appearance of a good building cannot, and must not, be anything but the visible expression of an efficient structural or constructional reality.

In other words, form must be the necessary result, and not the initial basis, of structure.

**Igor B. Polevitzky, FAIA**

*From an address before the 1955 State Convention of the Florida Home Builders Association in Tampa, Fla., October 21, and printed in the November, 1955, Florida Architect*)

Yes, our climate is wonderful, but it also poses many a problem both to the architect and builder. Our air temperatures are fairly comfortable the year around, but the sun is beastly hot. We don't have many drizzles but when the rains come, they come in buckets and without warning.

Let's face it—we have termites, ants, sand flies and mosquitoes; everything propagates at a rapid rate in Florida, and they are no exception. We have hurricanes.

Even in South Florida we have cold snaps, two or more weeks at a time. All these factors must be considered, but in their proper light, for it is true that on the average we can expect 340 days of comfortable sunny weather per year.

**Bryan Westwood, FRIBA**

*(In his inaugural address as president of the Architectural Association)*

I have seen buildings only recently completed where quite obviously the main enthusiasm of the designer was the effect the exterior might have on a very sophisticated public; the internal planning having apparently received attention of a different order. There are, of course, buildings which demand a formalistic sculptural treatment—the Penguin Pool springs to mind—and just occasionally when structural considerations, though still of interest, are secondary to the main conception, the preconceived idea is justified. It can easily be argued that we are all formalists in some degree, but it is the extremes of formalism that bring to their perpetrators a stimulating spate of publicity but by their excesses do so much harm and make general progress more difficult.

## The Editor's Asides

CHICAGO IS COMING TO THE CONVICTION already prevalent in Texas—that drafting is practically out of the question in hot weather unless air conditioning is brought to the rescue. A survey in Chicago this past summer compared a definite unit of work as performed during the 11-day heat wave in August and in a period after the heat wave broke. The heat cut the efficiency just about in half.

EMIL LORCH, FAIA, whose labors of love in the preservation cause had long ago reached an enviable total, is, after his "retirement," not even slowing down. Public recognition of his contributions, such as that noted in last year's crop of Honors, it would seem, only increases his speed. Here's a direction signpost in a recent letter he wrote us in the effort to further the preservation cause by enlisting additional recruits:

"Since the architectural schools could greatly further the Institute preservation program, the idea that they collaborate with those now active was submitted for consideration at a meeting in Minneapolis

of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture. The schools have resources in staff, highly specialized experts often, research material and other potentials to help the Institute make a valuable contribution to the basic record of American architecture and preservation of representative buildings. I work on the Institute project with the enthusiastic chairman, Earl Reed. The Detroit Chapter, AIA, contributes the cost of reproducing pictures of selected buildings for the quintuple inventory forms; the Historical Society of Michigan provides the secretarial service for it, also for its more inclusive catalog of Michigan buildings which will be published. For the latter I serve as chairman of a committee on Michigan architecture. I understand that in New York City the Municipal Art Society is assisting the preservation group."

WOULD IT INTEREST YOU to know that starting salaries for beginning engineers are still going up? The graduate of last June averaged monthly a starting pay of \$381, as compared with \$363 for the June 1954 graduate.

These figures are compiled by Illinois Institute of Technology's placement office. Though an increase for the June graduate, the \$381 is a drop from the all-time high of \$383 for January '55 graduates. Combining January and June graduating engineers, the monthly pay was: 1949 - \$282; 1950 - \$288; 1951 - \$295; 1952 - \$328; 1953 - \$362; 1954 - \$368; 1955 - \$382. All these averages are for graduating engineers who have had some practical experience.

ONE OF THE LESSONS that today's technology brings home to the architect with something of a jolt is that the replacement of a penthouse picture window glass, too large for the building's freight elevators, is a job for a well piloted helicopter and is likely to be expensive.

SINCE CHESTERWOOD, the studio that Henry Bacon designed for Daniel Chester French in Stockbridge, Mass., was opened to the public last spring, it has become one of New England's shrines. During the first month it was opened, over 1000 visitors came to see the models of the Minute Man, the Seated Lincoln, the Alma Mater of Columbia College, the

John Harvard and other French masterpieces. The gardens that French laid out for his studio home form a fitting setting for the great sculptor's treasures. Chesterwood is closed for the winter months, but next spring the pilgrimage will begin again.

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY's new library building kept abreast of its construction schedule last winter by using polyethylene film as temporary covering for window openings. The translucent film is said to have withstood wind, snow and sleet, and held an interior temperature 30-50° warmer than outside. The Plastics Age marches on.

AFTER THE TWO-DAY SESSION in November, when The Octagon was host to the Student Conference, there was evident a dual increase in knowledge—the headquarters staff knew a lot more about architectural students, and the students knew something more about the Institute and its aims. The JOURNAL is still awaiting a definitive report of the proceedings which it hopes to publish. Meanwhile the staff is cheered by the realization that the future of the profession is to be in good hands.



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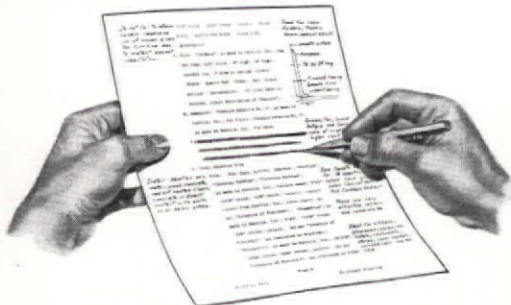
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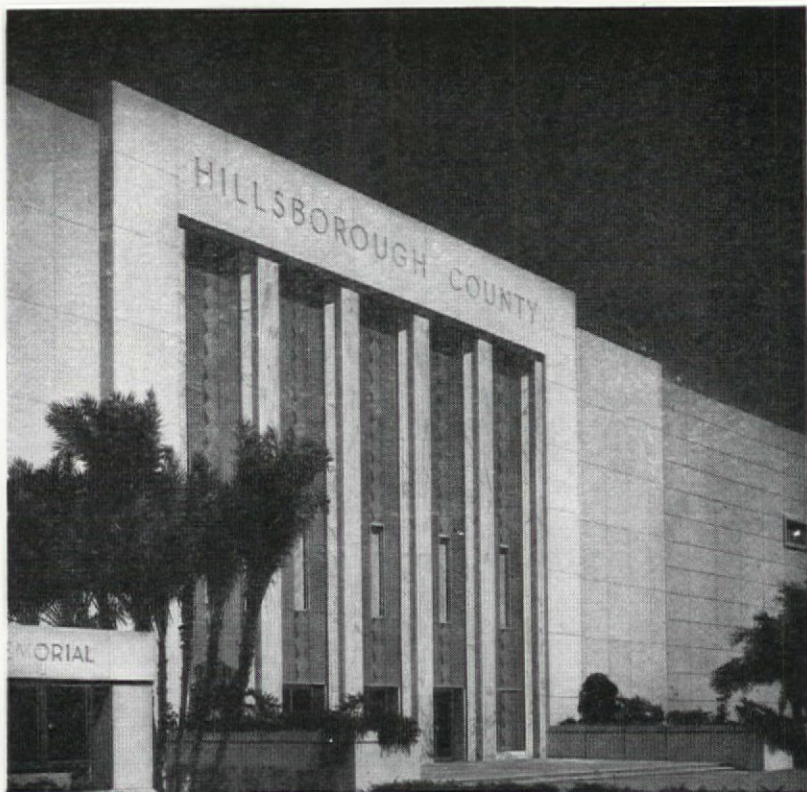
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*Architect: William O. Sparklin, Tampa, Fla.*

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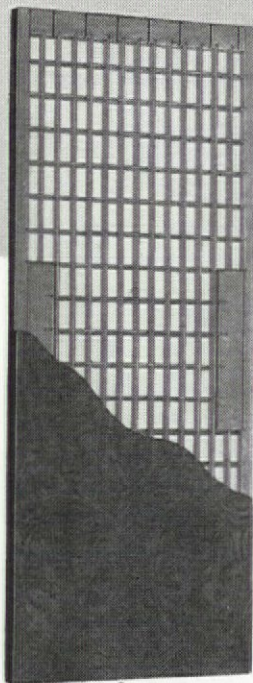
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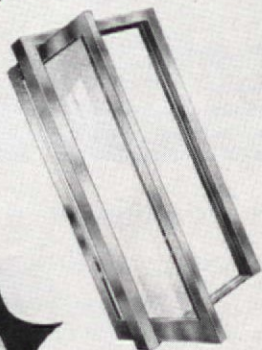
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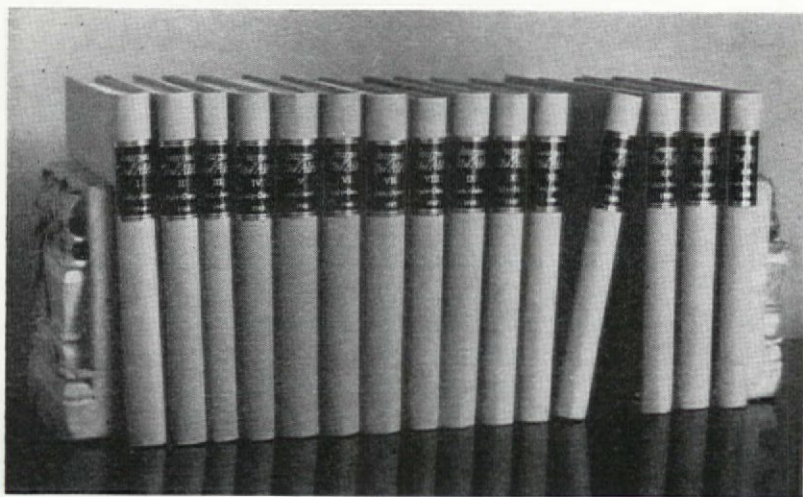


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